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Draft country programme document***

Malaysia

Summary

The Executive Director presents the draft country programme document for Malaysia for discussion and comments. The Executive Board is requested to approve the aggregate indicative budget of $1,500,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $1,500,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2005 to 2007.

* Submission of the present document was delayed by necessary consultations with the UNICEF country office.

** E/ICEF/2004/8.

*** In accordance with Executive Board decision 2002/4 (E/ICEF/2002/8), the present document will be revised and posted on the UNICEF web site in October 2004, together with the summary results matrix. It will then be approved by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2005.

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Basic data (2002 unless otherwise stated)	
Child population (millions, under 18 years)	9.3
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	8
Underweight (%, moderate and severe, 2001)	12
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births, 2000)	41
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female, 2000)	98/99
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%, 1996)	99
Use of improved drinking water sources (%)	
Adult HIV prevalence rate (%, 2001)	0.4
Child work (%, children 5-14 year-olds)	
GNI per capita (US$)	3,540
One-year-olds immunized against DPT3 (%)	96
One-year-olds immunized against measles (%)	92

The situation of children and women

1. Malaysia has reached a point in development where it would not normally qualify for UNICEF programme cooperation. However, some important issues remain for children and young people that will benefit from continued cooperation. During the next country programme, institutional arrangements for a post-UNICEF presence in Malaysia will need to be developed.

2. Children make up 33 per cent of Malaysia's population of 25 million. The country is ranked 58 on the Human Development Index, with per capita income comparable to countries that are about to join the European Union. The proportion of the population living under US$1 per day declined from 7.5 per cent in 1997 to 5.1 per cent in 2002.

3. Malaysia has a strong tradition of public investment in social services, which has engendered considerable progress in health and education. The under-five mortality rate fell from 21 to 8 per 1,000 live births between 1990 and 2001, a level comparable with high-income countries. Moreover, communicable diseases are no longer an important factor in child deaths. Instead, an increasing proportion of those deaths are due to injuries and accidents, with injuries being a leading cause. According to the Malaysian Vital Statistics Bulletin, in 2001 road traffic accidents alone killed 1,232 children, including 128 children under five.

4. Almost all children are enrolled in primary school. Girls and boys enjoy equal educational opportunities, with slightly more girls than boys enrolled in secondary and tertiary education. However, net secondary school enrolment for both girls and boys was only 89 per cent, according to Government data, a figure that points to a significant number of young people being left behind, unable to profit from and contribute to the country's progress. This drop-off in enrolment is clearly linked to other threats faced by adolescents that are discussed below.

5. Malaysia has ratified several key treaties protecting children's rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women were ratified in 1995, but the initial report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child has yet to be submitted. Malaysia also

ratified the International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions 138, in 1997, and 182, in 2000, and in 2002 signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

6. Child abuse is increasing, although it is difficult to make an accurate determination of its prevalence. A Forum on Caring for Children of Malaysia, held in 1995, noted a twelve-fold increase in reported cases of child abuse in Peninsular Malaysia from 1981 to 1991, when the number of cases reached 970.

7. Malaysia has created an enabling environment for children, which includes statutory institutions, a dedicated non-governmental organization (NGO) coalition, and an increasingly aware public. All of them contribute to innovative approaches to combat child abuse. The 2001 Child Act consolidated three previous laws on child protection and juvenile justice and strengthened institutions established in 1991 for child protection under the Social Welfare Department.

8. Nevertheless, more attention needs to be paid to protecting the rights and well-being of adolescents. Many either do not enrol in, or finish, secondary school, and this issue is linked with Government concerns over rising rates of HIV/AIDS infection and drug use among young people. Both concerns were noted in Malaysia's statement to the 6th East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation on Children in 2003. Malaysia's statement to the United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS in 2001 also highlighted the fact that the Government is prioritizing prevention programmes for the young, as 80 per cent of HIV infections occur among the 20-35 age group.

9. According to Ministry of Health data, the adult HIV prevalence rate in 2001 was 0.4 per cent, and by June 2003, the total reported HIV infections were 54,914. Other calculations are higher. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates the number of people infected with HIV to be between 120,000 and 200,000, and when non-reported cases are factored in, the Ministry of Health estimates the number to be around 90,000. In 2002, 76 per cent of reported new infections occurred among drug users, who according to the Home Ministry numbered nearly 32,000 people.

10. Although the epidemic is still concentrated mainly among those adopting high-risk behaviours and in vulnerable situations, it has begun to spread to the mainstream population. Though absolute numbers are still small, they still show a steep rise in infections among heterosexuals and women. In 2002, a reported 1,218 cases of HIV infection among heterosexuals represented an increase of 46 per cent over the number of cases in 2001. Moreover, HIV infections in women, comprising 1 per cent of all infections in 1990, rose to 9 per cent in 2002, according to Government statistics. UNAIDS estimates that by end of 2001, AIDS had orphaned 14,000 children.

11. Another issue affecting adolescents is their lack of voice in matters that concern them. In a 2001 opinion survey of children and adolescents 9 to 17 years old in East Asia and the Pacific entitled, "Speaking Out", less than half of Malaysia's respondents said they felt their opinions were highly valued in their home. A similar proportion said their opinions were ignored in community matters affecting young people. The survey indicated that there is less attention paid to children's views in Malaysia than elsewhere in the region.

12. Malaysia has a high proportion of refugees and the displaced. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, displaced persons (the definition

includes legal and illegal immigrants, foreign-born workers and refugees) comprise around 10 per cent of the population. Only a minority of them are officially recognized as refugees. Many foreign-born people in Malaysia are from Indonesia and Myanmar, and a high proportion of them are in the country unofficially, without an automatic entitlement to public services.

Key results and lessons learned from previous cooperation, 1999-2003

Key results achieved

13. Malaysia has met all the Millennium Development Goals, with the exception of reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS. UNICEF has advocated making this rich experience in achieving the Goals available to other developing countries. A joint project by the United Nations country team and the Government of Malaysia is currently under way to document the key factors and generic lessons to be learned from Malaysia's successes in poverty reduction, basic education, gender equality and women's empowerment, maternal health, and child mortality reduction. The document will be completed by late 2004.

14. This advocacy is also leading to a broadening of the Government's technical cooperation programme (TCDC) to provide support to countries in the region in primary health care and primary education. The Ministry of Health and UNICEF will collaborate in an initial TCDC pilot in maternal health and in sanitation.

15. Many efforts have supported information exchange. At the Organization of the Islamic Conference Summit, held in Malaysia in 2003, UNICEF and the Government shared key information with participants, and UNICEF presented a report demonstrating Malaysia's relative strengths in girls' education, maternal health and reduction of infant mortality.

16. In two study tours during 2002-2003, UNICEF also enabled two Ministries to learn from other countries in their experiences with the rehabilitation of children with special needs and with early childhood education. The Ministry of Health used the information to improve the capacity of rehabilitation staff working with children with disabilities. Similarly, using information from their study tour, the Ministry of Rural Development created new training modules in early childhood education and used its resources to train all teachers in this field.

17. Another important information tool produced in 2003 was the National Survey on Sexual Abuse among Adolescent Students. The survey, which included 32,000 respondents, was organized by the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development, two NGOs, the HELP Institute Centre for Psychology and UNICEF. Malaysia's first nationwide study on the issue, which is a widespread concern in the region, the survey will provide baseline data and serve as a framework for policy-making and service provision by NGOs and the Government.

18. Other surveys conducted, on HIV/AIDS, showed that out-of-school young people are less knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS and are more inclined to engage in risky behaviour than their school-going peers. Using results from the surveys, UNICEF successfully advocated for extending the Healthy Lifestyles without HIV/AIDS for Youth (ProStar) project for young people in school to those out of school. UNICEF is also supporting the Government in piloting a model for out-of-

school young people that features training in life skills and entrepreneur skills, peer outreach programmes, and youth participation. Launched in two states, the model is expected to be replicated in additional states with funding from the Government and others.

Lessons learned

19. The 2002-2004 country programme attempted to achieve results on a broad range of project initiatives while at the same time orienting activities towards setting up a successor entity. This was an ambitious goal, given the fact that UNICEF has much to learn about how to make the transition to carrying out advocacy, partnerships and fund-raising after programme support ends. Only one professional post was established in the office to cover both sets of activities, and this was not enough to carry out the intensive partnership-building necessary. Therefore, the proposed country programme will focus on a few strategic initiatives aiming for highly visible outcomes regarding child rights issues, and it will be better staffed.

20. An assessment of the ProStar HIV/AIDS project conducted by UNICEF regional staff underscored the importance of introducing targeted prevention approaches to help those young people who are, or in the future could be, engaged in high-risk behaviours. This is very relevant to the Malaysian context, as the epidemic is still primarily confined to high-risk behaviour groups. Therefore, arrangements are being made at the project planning stage to obtain adequate resources for advocacy and interventions.

The country programme, 2005-2007

Summary budget table

	(In thousands of United States dollars)		
Programme	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Total*
Youth development and participation	300	500	800
Protection of children from injuries and abuse	300	500	800
Strengthening the Malaysian movement for children	300	300	600
Cross-sectoral costs	600	200	800
Total	**1 500**	**1 500**	**3 000**

Preparation process

21. The decision to seek an extension of the Malaysia-UNICEF programme of cooperation was taken in August 2003. The preparation process began following discussions about modalities with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Department of the Prime Minister. The Country Programme Strategy paper was distributed to all key Ministries by the EPU, and a strategy meeting, organized by the EPU and attended by Government Ministries, endorsed the direction and main components of the proposed programme.

Goals, key results and strategies

22. Because this is the last programme of cooperation with Malaysia, its overall goal is to develop innovative models to cope with emerging threats to the survival, development, protection and participation of children while at the same time ensuring a well-managed transition to a successor entity, ultimately leading to the establishment of a National Committee.

23. Given the impediments to transition encountered in the last programme cycle, the new programme will limit programming interventions to a few key child rights priorities. The programme will help to build national capacity to reduce marginalization and abuse of children, enhance the life skills of young people, particularly to prevent HIV infection, and promote the rights of all children.

24. Recognizing the relatively large capacity of the Government of Malaysia, and of Malaysian society as a whole, to support the full realization of children's rights, UNICEF inputs will continue to focus on advocacy and technical cooperation for policy and institutional development and formulation of a few innovative models for potential replication by the Government. Service delivery will continue to be a responsibility of the Government and its private and civil society partners. Key results to be achieved through the programme by 2007 are the following:

(a) In the states of Kedah, Pahang and Sarawak, 60 per cent of out-of-school young people will have acquired knowledge and skills to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections and drug use, and state capacity to develop necessary psychosocial competencies will be increased;

(b) In the states of Kedah, Pahang and Sarawak, 80 per cent of secondary-school clubs (described in "Programme components" below) will have annual plans of activities, and regular teacher-student consultations, with clear plans for nationwide application;

(c) Nationwide, 70 per cent of families will have received information leading to reduction in the incidence of accidents and injuries;

(d) In two project implementation districts, 70 per cent of families will have received information and education leading to reduction in the incidence of child abuse;

(e) In two project implementation districts, 24 Child Activity Centres will have operational education, monitoring, counselling and enforcement systems to combat child abuse;

(f) A transition entity will have been operational for at least six months, in order to guarantee succession on closure of the UNICEF country office;

(g) At least three TCDC events will have disseminated information about Malaysia's success in child survival and development.

Relationship to national priorities and the UNDAF

25. The country programme deals with key emerging issues while building a transition entity for channelling Malaysia's expertise and resources into continued protection and caring of children. The planned interventions and intended outcomes are consistent with the concept of building a caring society — a key principle in the Malaysia Vision 2020. They are also linked to some main thrusts of the Eighth

Malaysia Plan 2001-2005, which include: provision of adequate and quality social services that are accessible to all, especially the lower-income groups, the disadvantaged and those with special needs; an increase in enrolment rates at the secondary level; developing the capacity of young people to promote healthy life styles and to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS, smoking and drug use; and the fostering of harmony and unity in a multi-ethnic society.

26. Since the CCA/UNDAF process does not apply to the Malaysian context, UNICEF uses the United Nations country team as the main mechanism for working with other United Nations agencies towards achieving the goals of the United Nations system in Malaysia.

Relationship to international priorities

27. The Programme will focus on the few goals and targets of Millennium Agenda yet to be achieved, including the Millennium Development Goals, which also overlap with the priorities of *A World Fit for Children*, UNICEF's medium-term strategic plan, and the Bali Consensus of the 6th East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation on Children. These key elements are HIV/AIDS, youth development, protection of children from abuse, and prevention of child accidents and injury, an emerging priority in the East Asia and Pacific region. Advocacy will support the establishment of a successor entity for child rights protection in the country as well as the *World Fit for Children* and Millennium goal of promoting global partnerships for development.

Programme components

Youth Development and Participation

28. This programme will address issues relating to drop-out rates in secondary school, the risks of HIV/AIDS and drug use, and an increasing sense of dissatisfaction expressed by young people. Key factors to receive attention are a) the perception among a substantial number of young people that their opinions do not receive adequate attention; and b) the low level of knowledge and psychosocial skills relating to prevention of HIV/AIDS.

29. The Youth-Friendly Schools project will help secondary-school administrators, teachers and parents create a more youth-friendly teaching and learning environment through several means: increased responsiveness to young people's needs on the part of the administration and teachers; the creation of more opportunities for students to develop a sense of unity and harmony, self-esteem, and leadership; and co-curricular activities organized by young people for their protection and development. The main mechanism will be enhancement of existing school clubs or student councils to increase student participation, enabling students to contribute ideas for improving the school environment. Concurrently, students will be encouraged in the clubs or councils to develop positive values, including ethnic harmony, in and out of school; healthy lifestyles; protection of the environment; and positive student-teacher relationships. UNICEF will provide funds for developing an appropriate model, technical assistance, and the adaptation of international good practices in this area to the Malaysia context.

30. The HIV/AIDS prevention for Out-of-School Young People project will build on and improve the quality of the prevention activities implemented through the current ProStar project, and will provide young people with knowledge and psychosocial skills to protect themselves and their peers from HIV/AIDS and drug use. This will be accomplished by several means: catalysing public discussion on HIV/AIDS prevention, stigmatization, and care for those (especially children) affected by AIDS; the promotion of non-discrimination through policy and media advocacy, including technical assistance with the 'With hope and help' advocacy initiative to support compassion and support for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS; providing lifeskills-based HIV/AIDS education using peer education methods; and developing pilot interventions for high-risk behaviour groups such as drug users and commercial sex workers and their children, including specific prevention strategies and services. UNICEF assistance will focus on several aspects: advocacy for policies creating an enabling environment for young people, through which they can contribute to and co-own the initiative; capacity-building in social research and behaviour surveillance; capacity-building of local human resources in lifeskills and psychosocial competencies as well as in monitoring and evaluation of life skills-based training; providing best-practice examples of materials and curricula from other programmes in the region.

31. The two projects will be implemented as models in the states of Kedah, Pahang and Sarawak, representing Peninsular and East Malaysia. If more other resources funds become available, the models will be replicated in two additional states. The ultimate goal is for the models to be replicated in all states, under Government or NGO funding and management. The projects will be implemented by the Ministries of Education and Health as well as state governments, in collaboration with parent-teacher associations, NGOs, the Malaysian AIDS Council, local universities, the corporate sector, United Nations agencies and young people.

Protection of Children from Injuries and Abuse

32. This programme will address these two threats to children, which persist despite Malaysia's development successes. Several East Asian countries have undertaken accident and injury surveys in the past year, and a major conference on the subject is taking place in Bangkok in April 2004. The conference will cover protection of children from death and disability due to a wide variety of accidents, including drowning, injuries from road traffic and home-based accidents. Malaysia's experience in preventing road accidents and protecting children from major injury can serve as an example for other countries in the region dealing with this issue. The findings of a planned national survey on childhood accidents and injuries should provide a clearer understanding of the causes and circumstances of accident-related morbidity and mortality, and help with the design and implementation of preventive programmes.

33. The Prevention of Child Abuse project, using the existing institutional infrastructure of Child Protection Teams and Child Activity Centres, will develop a model for establishing a system of prevention, monitoring and counselling for combating child abuse, for potential replication by Government. The project partners will be the Social Welfare Department of the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development, local governments, and the NGO Coalition for Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse, led by the organization PS The Children.

34. The interventions will include raising awareness about child abuse and strategies for prevention among communities covered by the Child Activity Centres; training of Centre staff and volunteers on prevention education, and development of abuse-monitoring mechanism; empowering children served by the Centres in their own protection and reporting; capacity-building of relevant local government and national Government officials, Child Protection Teams, and staff of the NGO Coalition on programming for child sexual abuse; monitoring and evaluation; and research. The project will also mobilize mass media to increase public awareness.

35. UNICEF will provide funds to develop the model, focusing on providing technical assistance for the following areas: training of staff and volunteers; research, monitoring and evaluation; and international networking for sharing of knowledge on global best practices in the prevention of child abuse.

36. UNICEF will support Malaysia in professional and programme exchange with other countries active in PMCT in the region. UNICEF will also assist the Government in assessing the vulnerability of children to HIV/AIDS and in carrying out response analysis.

Strengthening the Malaysian Movement for Children

37. This programme will build a strong constituency of intellectual, moral and financial support from Malaysian society to ensure a viable and lasting UNICEF entity after 2007, using opportunities generated by Malaysia's progress in meeting the commitments of the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals. The programme will also enable other developing countries to share experiences and learn from Malaysia's successes in basic social service policy and programme delivery.

38. The UNICEF Successor Entity project aims to establish a successor entity committed to protecting rights of children — in Malaysia and throughout the world — through creative mobilization of the Malaysian people's commitment to children as well as the leadership of the Government, religious and business groups and civil society. The successor entity will no longer be funded by UNICEF after 2007 but will remain within the broader UNICEF family in terms of mandate, mission and objectives. The project will use market research, brainstorming sessions, national consultations, experience-exchange visits to successful National Committees, public information campaigns, goodwill ambassadors, round tables with key leaders and professionals, and policy advocacy initiatives to develop a mandate, structure and set of operational procedures for the entity. The project will be coordinated by the EPU of the Office of the Prime Minister. UNICEF will also work closely with other key Ministries, religious leaders, Malaysian leaders and experts, the corporate sector, and young people dedicated to protecting child rights.

39. The TCDC project will support the expansion of the Government's current initiative to include programmes on basic social service delivery, particularly programmes involving maternal and child health, water and sanitation, and basic education. The project will be implemented by the EPU of the Office of the Prime Minister in close collaboration with Ministries of Health and Education and selected universities and institutes studying development. UNICEF will provide technical assistance to conduct research, develop monographs, case studies, training modules and web materials, and to organize experience-exchange visits.

40. **Cross-sectoral costs** will cover the expenses of a Programme Officer to ensure not only that programmes can be implemented smoothly but also that lessons from the programmes are culled and communicated. Some office expenses will also be paid from this funding.

Major partnerships

41. UNICEF will work closely with the Government at federal and state levels on policy development and programme implementation. UNICEF will continue to work closely with other United Nations agencies in the United Nations country team, especially with UNDP on the TCDC project and WHO on HIV/AIDS, child accidents and injuries. The National NGO Coalition for Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse will be a key partner in prevention of child abuse. Teachers, youth leaders, in-school and out-of-school young people will be important partners in implementing young people's participation initiatives in secondary schools and in promoting healthy lifestyles. The programme will also work in partnership with religious leaders, NGOs, the corporate sector, and professional organizations for advocacy and public education, in prevention of accident and injury, child abuse, and the establishment of a successor entity to UNICEF. Media will be an important ally for advocacy and public awareness-raising for all aspects of the programme. Child Protection Teams, staff and volunteers in Child Activity Centres, children, parents and community groups are key partners in prevention of child abuse and injury. The UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office and Malaysian universities and research institutions will assist in providing technical assistance in areas of TCDC, HIV/AIDS, research, and monitoring and evaluation.

42. UNICEF will consult with the Government to seek innovative funding opportunities, including within the country, that can augment the country programme budget as well as position the successor entity for its future. These opportunities may include: matching contributions from the Government; corporate or individual in-kind and financial contributions; as well as fund-raising from the general public, including marketing and sales of UNICEF cards and products.

Monitoring, evaluation and programme management

43. The country programme results framework will be the basis for monitoring progress and planning evaluation of the country programme. An Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for 2005-2007 will include monitoring methods, an evaluation plan, and suggested studies. The Mid-Term Review will be held in mid-2006. The HIV/AIDS prevention project will be evaluated in 2005 to learn from three years of implementation. A summary evaluation will be undertaken in 2007, to consolidate learning from the programme for Malaysia.

44. The key results indicators include: percentage of out-of-school young people with knowledge and psychosocial skills for HIV/AIDS prevention; percentage of secondary schools with operational student councils; incidence of accidents and injuries in project districts; the number of Child Activity Centres that have activities for combating child abuse; and funds raised by the UNICEF successor agency as a ratio to the annual regular resources budget.

45. The EPU of the Department of the Prime Minister will coordinate the preparation of annual project plans and the organization of periodic reviews, including mid-term and end-of-cycle reviews, with technical assistance from

UNICEF. Designated counterpart Ministries will implement and monitor projects based on the annual project plans, in collaboration with state governments and NGOs.

46. UNICEF Malaysia's attempts to build a successor entity in the 2002-2004 programme cycle were critically hampered by lack of human resources and insufficient experience in the process. To support the new country programme, the following key staff members have been appointed to the office: (a) an accredited Representative, responsible for overall programme and office management; (b) an international Programme Officer to support programme management, advocacy and documentation; and (c) a national Communication Officer to oversee key activities in information, education and communication.